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# HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

City and County of San Francisco

## ***SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION***

### ***Meeting Minutes***

**February 23, 2023 5:00 PM**

#### **ROSTER OF COMMISSIONERS**

Karen Clopton, Chairperson  
Ann Champion Shaw, Vice-Chairperson  
Vanessa R. Aquino, Commissioner  
Jayson Johnson, Commissioner  
Mark Kelleher, Commissioner  
Jason Pellegrini, Commissioner  
Leah Pimentel, Commissioner  
Irene Yee Riley, Commissioner  
Michael Sweet, Commissioner  
Joseph Sweiss, Commissioner

Sheryl Evans Davis, EdD  
Executive Director

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For more information, contact the Commission Secretary at 415-252-2500  
Agenda and other information are available on the HRC website: [www.sfgov.org/sfhumanrights](http://www.sfgov.org/sfhumanrights)

**Meeting was called to order at 5:05pm.**

Ramaytush Ohlone Land Acknowledgement – **Commissioner Sweiss.**

**1. 0:04 CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Present:** Karen Clopton, Ann Champion Shaw, Mark Kelleher, Jason Pellegrini, Michael Sweet, Joseph Sweiss, Irene Yee Riley

**Absent:** Vanessa R. Aquino, Jayson Johnson, Leah Pimentel

Meeting was called to order with 7 Commissioners present. Chair Clopton thanked Commissioners and Director Davis for their work at the retreat his afternoon: She cited that today we were able to align our goals and strategic planning in order to support the Commission's important work.

As the Commission continue to move forward in the important work of the Human Rights Commission, with the goals of Equity and Inclusion, for all keeping in mind, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the global movement that (we) participate in making sure that all voices are heard.

The Commission has done a lot of work over the last four years, and continues to do so under the leadership of the Director; the HRC has institutionalized the dream keepers Initiative and the LGBTQ AI Advisory Committee and other important human rights initiatives.

**2. 6:19 FINDINGS TO ALLOW TELECONFERENCED MEETINGS UNDER CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT**

**CODE SECTION 54953(E)** (Action Item) The Commission will discuss and possibly adopt a Resolution setting forth findings necessary to authorize the Commission to hold meetings remotely under the modified Brown Act provisions in Assembly Bill 361.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment on this item.

Motion to allow Teleconferenced Meetings under California Government Code Section 54953(E) was made by Commissioner Riley and seconded by Vice Chair Shaw. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

**3. 5:31 GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT** *(Discussion Item)*

Members of the public may address the Commission on matters that are within the Commission's jurisdiction and are not on today's agenda.

There was no public comment on this item.

**4. 9:32 ADOPTION OF THE February 9, 2023 MEETING MINUTES** *(Discussion and Possible Action Item)*

Review and anticipated adoption of minutes from the Commission's February 9, 2023 meeting.

**Public Comment**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment on this item.

Motion to adopt February 9, 2023 meeting minutes as submitted: 1st Commissioner Sweiss, 2nd Vice Chair Shaw. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

**5. 11:14 STAFF INTRODUCTIONS** *(Discussion Item)*

New Staff members of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission will introduce themselves to the Commissioners.

**Presentation:** Michelle McNeal, Illustrator and Art Designer

Staff was unable to join the Commission this eve, and as a result Staff Introductions will be scheduled at a future date.

**6. 11:49 COMMISSION RETREAT REPORT** *(Discussion Item)*

Commissioners update the public on activities they have participated in and any upcoming events.

**Presentation:** Chair Clopton and the Commissioners of the Human Rights Commission

**Public Comment**

**Vice Chair Shaw:** Cited having had a wonderful time at the retreat. Going forward, would want to engage more with the SHARP program. Additionally, will provide more support for the African American Reparations committee.

**Commissioner Sweet**

Noted how much had changed within the HRC over the years, staffing and budget. The organization has grown and there remains much to do. The Director has a vision for the HRC and he stated the Commission should stand by her and support her.

**Commissioner Sweiss:** Thanked the Commissioners for the retreat. Thanked the Chair for all the work she puts into the Commission, and complimented the Vice Chair for stepping so quickly and effectively into the new role. Commented on how the LGBTQI Advisory Council (AC) has come along; how they are meeting their goals and hitting their milestones. Cited the work done with transportation in the Bayview and the MTA; thanked Commissioner Sweet for his efforts to see this work through.

**Commissioner Pellegrini:** Would like to work more with the Civil Rights Division, particularly around Fair Housing Ordinance, and noted he echoed everything said before him. Would like to work with the Divisions and ensure the great work, and services of the Human Rights Commission, are made more visible and available to people in the City.

**Commissioner Riley:** Noted it had been a long time since all the Commissioners had been together in person for a retreat, and how nice it was. She intends to continue working closely with Stand Together SF and the Campaign for Solidarity, and she would like to help and support the API focused RFP 78 process and ensure it is promoted with the hope of achieving greater response from community organizations. She noted Director Davis comments about being understaffed and offered support to help promote budget approval in expectations that it will lead to filling the open staff positions.

**Commissioner Kelleher:** Proud of the work done with the LGBTQI AC advisory committee here in the city this last year in reorganizing its bylaws to make it more accessible to the community.

Priority this year is to coordinate with the other Commissioners and the community leaders involved in the committee to ensure that the Committee continues to coordinate with the Commission and its staff working on issues that impact to our community. Perhaps form a supportive Community Advisory Board.

Will prioritize creating means to aid people and community organizations learning (having access to materials) the potential for funding from the city through the budget process, and other means, grants etc. Focus on small organizations that are just getting started and may not have means to research the process of applying for City Funding.

Additionally will look at issues regarding the impact of violence in our community and the threat of violence across the LGBTQ plus community. There is a coalition developing of community organizations to address this, particularly involving marginalized youth and other vulnerable populations. Our work (in the AC) over the past years looked at this rise in violence and its impact on the community. This work needs to continue and it will be a focus in the coming year.

**Chair Clopton:** Thanked the Commissioners and stated “we can definitely hear from all of the commissioners present their appreciation for the staff, and the leadership of Director Davis, as well as a desire to participate more in the different divisions of the Commission's missions and activities.

We are here as not only a policy body under the charter, but as support and assistant to the staff, and Director Davis in reaching the goals. The budget has gone from \$3 million , five years ago to \$15 million now, and with the concomitant obligations and responsibilities having expanded exponentially and staffing is so important in addressing inequity in our city and county. Towards that and we want to remain committed to being in alignment with our goals and responsibilities in support of the staff and Director Davis as well as each other.”

She stated her active support and willingness to talk to whoever is needed to about the budget and getting the budget approved.

Cited importance of having the Dream Keepers Initiative fully staffed, and to make it a permanent part of the Human Rights Department.

There is a lot of work ahead over the next 12 months. She noted October, which is Domestic Violence Prevention Month, is something that should absolutely be on our calendar; a report from SHARP will be planned for that month. Please ensure the staff through Director Davis know of the Commission’s support for the staff and our willingness to participate in planning, organizing and presenting at events. Additionally the Commission is interested in having official Commission meetings and hearings in community at least two times in the year “so that people don't have to come to City Hall but can remain in their community to come out to make comment and also observe how we operate because our operations, our grants, contracts, were programs and divisions are all transparent and open to the public and all the information regarding everything that we do is available to the public.”

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment on this item.

7. **31:58 COMMISSIONER ACTIVITIES IN THE COMMUNITY** (*Discussion Item*)

Commissioners update the public on activities they have participated in and any upcoming events.

**Public Comment**

**Vice Chair Shaw:**

Attended the Soulful, Sunday brunch with Chief Bill Scott and DA, Brooke Jenkins over on Mission Street. This Sunday, February the 26<sup>th</sup>, at Bethel AME on Laguna Street, will have Dr. David Golightly, who is speaking of black history, the first African American President of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California.

**Commissioner Riley:** Attended the joint celebration of Lunar New Year and Black History Month. Director Davis came up with a very catchy name for this event: Drumbeats, Heartbeats: Communities as one. It was well attended.

The performances were very heartwarming and touching. “When I heard the black saxophone player played a famous Chinese music that was so cool. And the rappers; an Asian young man and a young lady , they were amazing. There was plenty of healthy food at the reception.”

At the event John McKnight presented the awards to the winners of our art campaign, and we received many wonderful entries this time.

Chair Clopton and Commissioner Jason Pellegrini were there as well.

**Chair Clopton:** Heartbeats, Drumbeats was amazing. The combinations were incredible and busted all ideas of stereotypes. And it really amplified the universality of poetry and music.

It was an incredible evening and then afterwards great conviviality around food and, and meeting new people and, and making new friends, a beautiful cross cultural experience.

Yesterday, there was the homecoming in City Hall at the closing of the city's Black History Month activities; it was organized by the Mayor and our state comptroller Malia Cohen, as they've done over the last nine years. This is the first one that's been in person of course, since the pandemic so since 2019, over 900 people attended; they filled the North Light Court and all of City Hall were filled to the brim and jumping. Great entertainment: a marching band, and Broadway singers, dancers and, of course, because the theme was homecoming highlighting the “Divine Nine”, there were members of each fraternity and sorority present and in their

regalia. And Mayor Brown came in and said a few words. It was emceed by Miranda, and we had The Voice here (Those of you who know KBLX, 102.9).

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment on this item.

**8. 41:14 ADJOURNMENT** Meeting adjourned at 5:46pm.

Motion to Adjourn: 1st Commissioner Sweiss, 2nd Commissioner Riley

Transcription of the meeting minutes are available upon request to the Commission Secretary, [john.mcknight@sfgov.org](mailto:john.mcknight@sfgov.org).